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CONGRESSMAN

RANDY HULTGREN*Proudly Representing the 14th District of Illinois*[Home](#)[About Randy](#)[Serving You](#)[News](#)[Our District](#)[Contact](#)

November 8, 2013

Honoring Those who Serve

This Veteran's Day weekend, we pause to honor those in our Armed Forces who are defending this great nation and renew our commitment to the brave men and women who have served and continue to serve us. I offer my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the 765,000 veterans in Illinois and 47,500 in the 14th district.

Please see below for a sampling of events going on in the 14th District surrounding Veteran's Day. As our veterans continuously display acts of self-sacrifice, admiration and allegiance to our country, I encourage you to attend and show your support. [I am looking forward to honoring our veterans at the ceremony in Batavia on Monday beginning at 10:00 a.m. and I hope to see some of you there.](#)

Further below is information about veteran resources, programs and volunteer opportunities.

With great pride I have cosponsored and voted for several bills strengthening veteran access to well-deserved benefits including health care and disability claims. I want to ensure their selfless service to our country is recognized and afford them opportunities to enhance their quality of life.

- **H. Res. 231 - Establishing a Select Committee on POW and MIA Affairs.** More than 83,000 United States personnel from all wars are still unaccounted for, including MIA's and POW's missing and captured. H. Res. 231 would provide for a full investigation into all unresolved matters relating to United States personnel unaccounted for from all wars and make recommendations for immediate actions.
- **H.R. 241 - Veterans Timely Access to Health Care Act.** Our brave men and women who have sacrificed much to serve our country deserve the best and timeliest medical treatment. H.R. 241 would ensure veteran access to hospital and medical care within 30 days from the date of original contact with the Department of Veterans Affairs. This Act would further direct the VA Secretary to conduct a review of VA medical facilities to ensure this deadline is met, requiring quarterly reports to congressional veterans' committees regarding waiting times.
- **H.R. 2189 - To improve the processing of disability claims by the Department of Veterans Affairs.** This bill would establish a commission or task force to evaluate the backlog of disability claims of the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- **H.R. 235 - Veteran Emergency Medical Technician Support Act of 2013.** This bill would amend the Public Health Service Act to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to establish a demonstration program for states with a shortage of emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and to streamline state requirements and procedures to assist veterans who completed military EMT training while serving in the Armed Forces to meet state EMT certification, licensure and other requirements.

In Your Service,

Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress
14th District, Illinois

Upcoming Events:

Aurora, IL: November 11, 2013

City of Aurora's annual Veteran's Day Parade and Ceremony will begin at 10:15 a.m. at Benton St. and Broadway Ave. in downtown Aurora. The parade features numerous veterans' organizations, various honor guard units, schools and other local organizations. The parade ends with a remembrance ceremony in front of the Grand Army of the Republic building, 23 E. Downer Place.

Batavia, IL: November 11, 2013

Batavia, Veteran's Day Ceremony at The Hangar: 645 South River Street (IL Route 25) on the east side of the Fox River in Batavia, Illinois. Performances by the Aurora Christian Choir and

Colonel Paul Hastings as guest speaker. Event begins at 10:00 a.m. followed by a gun salute at 11:00 a.m. For more information, contact Marcia Maytum: (630) 879-9630.

Cantigny Park, Wheaton, IL: November 11, 2013

Luminaria beginning at sunset (about 5:00 p.m.) - 9:00 p.m.

Veterans' Voices Presentation: 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

The program features living history re-enactors reading actual letters written and posted by soldiers through the years. Cantigny Post 556 of the American Legion will host tables at the museum and Visitors Center and the Cantigny Shop. Bertie's Coffee Shop will be open throughout the evening and will offer a cup of coffee to all veterans during the luminary display.

Free Event, No parking fee. For more information, please call: (630) 260-8187

DeKalb, IL: November 13, 2013

The DeKalb Firefighters, in conjunction with the Associated Firefighters of Illinois Warrior Program, has reached the goal of purchasing a vehicle for a severely wounded Illinois veteran. They will be presenting the new vehicle to a soldier from Southern Illinois, who was wounded in combat while serving in Afghanistan in 2012. This presentation will take place at the Northern Illinois University Home Football game on November 13th. For more information, contact Luke Howieson: (815) 748-8490.

Joliet, IL: November 11, 2013

Beginning around 10:00 a.m., a ceremony will be held outside Will County courthouse located at 14 W. Jefferson St. in Joliet. All attendees may enjoy a complimentary breakfast following the ceremony.

McHenry, IL: November 11, 2013

There will be a 10:00 a.m. honor guard ceremony at the McHenry VFW followed by a free luncheon for all veterans. McHenry VFW Post #4600 is located at 3002 W. Route 120.

North Aurora, IL: November 11, 2013

The North Aurora Veteran's Day Ceremony will be held at 2:00 p.m. at the North Aurora Veteran's Memorial located at the intersection of Farview Drive and Willow Way in North Aurora. All are welcome to attend.

North Aurora, IL: November 7-11, 2013

The Moving Wall Veteran Memorial Wall will be on Display from November 7 - 11, 2013, at West Aurora High School. This is a half-sized replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. The 58,282 names listed on the Memorial represent the sacrifices of a generation during this time in our history. For more information and a schedule of this event, visit: <http://www.vietnammovingwallaurora.org/page3.htm>

Oswego, IL: November 9-11, 2013

Join the Little White School Museum as they honor Oswego area men and women who have served our country. Exhibits will include military artifacts, uniforms, equipment, souvenirs, and showcases home front memorabilia from World War I through Operation Desert Storm. The "Veterans' Remembrance" event will be held and all exhibits on display Saturday, November 9 (9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.); Sunday, November 10 (12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.) and Monday, November 11 (9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.).

St. Charles, IL: November 11, 2013

The City of St. Charles Annual Veteran's Day Ceremony is Sunday, November 11 at 10:40 a.m. at the Freedom Shrine, behind the St. Charles Police Station, 211 N. Riverside Avenue. The ceremony will begin with a reading of the official Veteran's Day Proclamation, followed by an invocation, salute to the flag, a 21-gun salute and the playing of Taps. All are welcome to attend.

Yorkville, IL: November 10, 2013

Chapel Veteran's Day Program: Chapel on the Green in Yorkville.

Doors open at 1:00 p.m. Program begins at 2:00 p.m. You will hear a variety of stories and reflections from a number of vets who have served in various branches of the military.

Following the presentations, you can enjoy some refreshments and spend time talking with the speakers. There is no charge for this Chapel event however, donations are always appreciated.

Resources and Volunteer Opportunities:

IL Department of Veteran's Affairs

The Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs (IDVA) runs 46 full-time and 35 part-time offices in 80 out of the 102 counties. The IDVA assists veterans in their search for services and benefits available to them, including:

- Compensation and Pension
- Health Care
- Education & Training
- Employment
- Burial & Survivor
- Housing
- Permits
- Transportation

Military Records

Look up your [Nearest Veteran Service Office](#) here.

Stand Up and Be Counted

By [Standing Up and Be Counted](#), you will also be assisting your fellow veterans by helping IDVA and the entire veteran advocacy community to gain a better understanding of whom and where Illinois' veterans are. This will help us plan for future services, fight for further federal VA funding and facilities and generally serve Illinois' veterans better.

IL Warrior Assistance Program

The [Illinois Warrior Assistance Program](#) offers free and confidential assistance for returning Illinois Veterans. Our goal is to help service members and families deal with emotional challenges they may be facing as they transition back to their daily lives.

Veterans' Care Program

The [Veterans' Care Program](#) is designed to provide comprehensive, affordable healthcare to Illinois' uninsured veterans. The Veterans Care Program covers those veterans who cannot currently access Veterans Health Administration's benefits and who meet specific income requirements.

Women Veterans' Care

Women Veterans who are interested in receiving care at VA should [contact their nearest VA Medical Center](#) and ask for the Women Veterans Program Manager. For a list of more: <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/womenvets.asp>

Resources

To navigate through benefits such as education and vocational rehabilitation compensation, education, life insurance, and pension, as well as check your claims status, access a Benefits Rates Table, or seek Beneficiary Financial Counseling, please visit <http://benefits.va.gov/benefits/>

To access the federal benefits booklet for Veterans, Dependents, and Survivors: http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp

For information regarding health and well-being, such as crisis prevention, prescriptions and PTSD please access <http://www.va.gov/health/>

What You Can Do

"Holiday Mail for Heroes" is a service offered by Red Cross and the assistance of their first-rate volunteers. Holiday greeting cards should be addressed and sent to:

Holiday Mail for Heroes
P.O. Box 5456
Capitol Heights, MD 20791-5456

****[Red Cross Card Guidelines Available on Website](#)****

Deadline is December 6th. Holiday cards received after this date cannot be guaranteed delivery.

Help Our Troops Donations

Monetary donations through Red Cross including caregiver training, phone cards and comfort kits for wounded service members can be made at:
https://american.redcross.org/site/Ecommerce?FOLDER=1273&store_id=7945

VA Homeless Veterans Program

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated that [62,619](#) veterans were homeless on any given night last year. There are plenty of opportunities to offer a hand to ensure that these heroes have a roof over their head.

The [VA](#) is committed to ending Veteran homelessness by the end of 2015. In fact, VA is the only Federal agency that provides substantial hands-on assistance directly to homeless persons. Although limited to veterans and their dependents, VA's major homeless-specific programs constitute the largest integrated network of homeless treatment and assistance services in the country.

[The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans](#) is a nonprofit network of local, state and federal agencies that provides housing, food, health services and job training to thousands of homeless veterans every year.

The [Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans](#) located in Wheaton, IL provides transitional and affordable housing programs and supportive services to U.S. veterans of any era to help them back to useful, productive lives.

Veterans Struggling with Mental Health Issues

The VA estimates that around [20](#) veterans committed suicide every day in 2012. With a host of complex issues contributing to veteran suicide, several organizations seek to address the distressing issues these vets face to keep them from taking their own lives.

[The Veterans Crisis Line](#) connects veterans with members in the VA through phone, chat or text, to provide care and even life-saving rescues to vets during this critical time.

[Give An Hour](#) calls on mental health professionals to donate an hour of their time to troops and their families.

Veterans with Disabilities

About [25 percent](#) of recent vets come home injured. Missing limbs, burns, spinal cord injuries and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are among the crushing conditions these veterans face in civilian life. Several organizations reach out to injured veterans and their families to help them heal and adapt to living with a disability.

[The Wounded Warrior Project](#) helps veterans with both their physical and invisible wounds -- with a special emphasis on stress relief -- as they adjust to life on the home front.

[Homes For Our Troops](#) raises money and provides services to build specially adapted homes for injured heroes.

Unemployed Vets

Just this fall, [6.3 percent of the nation's veterans were unemployed](#), with post-9/11 vets facing a 10 percent unemployment rate. These organizations and others are providing much-needed help for vets in today's job market.

[Wall Street War Fighters](#) six-month in-residence course for vets and extensive training is provided to prepare vets for a career in the finance industry.

[Hire Heroes USA](#) creates job opportunities for vets by providing personalized job training from other vets who have business experience.

For additional ways to volunteer or get involved, visit the [Volunteer or Donate](#) page to contact your local VAVS Program Manager.

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